
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers
Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



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Bill Expanding Aid to Illegal Immigrants Signed Into Law

On Wednesday, the House of Representatives passed and the President signed into law a bill to dramatically expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). However, rather than refocus SCHIP as a targeted safety net for low-income uninsured children, the House passed a bill to extend coverage to children in families with significantly higher incomes and opened the program to fraudulent use by illegal immigrants. Specifically, this legislation enables illegal aliens to fraudulently enroll in Medicaid and SCHIP by no longer requiring states to verify the identity of applicants for coverage. Rather, the bill would allow a simple, verbal presentation of any Social Security number to count as proof of U.S. citizenship. As a result of the flaws in this policy, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that it will lead to \$5.1 billion in additional federal Medicaid spending over the next ten years and the already cash-strapped states would have to spend an additional \$3.85 billion, ultimately requiring American taxpayers to pay a grand total of \$8.95 billion for healthcare to illegal immigrants. Congressman Miller opposed this legislation because it is a step away from the goals of securing our borders and enforcing our existing immigration laws. Rather than allowing illegal immigrants to further overwhelm our healthcare system, Congressman Miller believes this legislation should have focused on our nation's poorest children first and closed loopholes that facilitate fraud and abuse.

Congressman Miller Co-Authors Several Bills to Expand E-Verify

To stop employers from giving away American jobs to illegal immigrants, Congressman Miller this week co-authored several pieces of legislation to dramatically expand and make permanent the E-Verify program. This successful and commonsense program checks workers' names and Social Security numbers to confirm employment eligibility. Among the bills' provisions, the E-Verify program would be made permanent and implemented nationwide over the next seven years. In addition, all legislative branch and federal government contractors, as well as their subcontractors, would be required to immediately use the E-Verify program. If their names and Social Security numbers do not match, workers' would be required to resolve discrepancies in order to avoid termination. Congressman Miller is proud to support these commonsense proposals to improve worksite enforcement and will continue working to prevent illegal aliens from securing employment in violation of our nation's laws.

DTV Transition Postponed Until June 12, 2009

On Wednesday, the House passed a bill to postpone the digital television (DTV) transition date until June 12, 2009 and the President is expected to sign it into law in the next few days. In 2005, Congress set an original deadline of February 17, 2009 in which over-the-air full-power television broadcasts—which are currently provided by television stations in both analog and digital formats—to become digital only. The transition will free up scarce broadcasting spectrum for emergency first responders as well as the development of advanced services like wireless broadband Internet. For individuals that own an older TV which relies on "rabbit ears" or an outdoor antenna to receive a signal, it will be necessary to buy a converter box. To help defray the cost, every American household is eligible to apply for up to two coupons which will reduce the cost of purchasing a converter box by \$40. More information about how to apply for a coupon is available online at: www.dtv2009.gov.

IRS Offers Free Tax Preparation Assistance During 2009 Tax Season

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) offers local volunteer assistance programs for qualified individuals to receive free income tax preparation assistance. The IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program (TCE) offer free help for those who qualify. VITA/TCE sites are generally located in community and senior centers throughout Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino Counties. In addition, VITA and the Armed Forces Tax Council offer free tax preparation assistance for servicemembers and their families. To receive more information on these programs, contact Congressman Miller's Brea office at (714) 257-1142, or you can also contact the IRS by phone at (800) 829-1040 or visit them on the web at www.irs.gov.